EECS 448 Project 3: Uno
Retrospective Writeup

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Log of all meetings

Scrum 1 on March 27th 2019

Attendees: Eric, Earving, Travis.

- Meeting Date/Time: 03/27/19 during lecture time
- Meeting Place: Lecture classroom
- Purpose: Initial meeting, hashing out details for our more independent project, going over MVP requirements.
    - We decided that some sort of card-like game would be best. Something with bots at first, then possibly multiplayer elements.
    - Starting much earlier this time! Assigned some cursory duties for research/ideas

Scrum 2 on March 29th 2019

Attendees: Eric, Earving, Travis, Lauren

- Meeting Date/Time: 03/29/19 during friday lab time
- Meeting Place: Eaton computer center
- Purpose: Finalizing ideas and beginning task assignment, going over plan for the initial programming. Split things up into 3 small ‘sprints’ as seen on the Gantt chart. We also went over ideas for our Uno game, what we wanted to see and what we should expect for an MVP
    - Starting off with bots, basic comparative logic for playing cards was decided. No fancy ‘strategy’, just whatever works first
    - We decided some cursory design elements of the HTML mainly displaying the entire deck on screen at a single time
    - Went over the basic rules of the game. No weird deck swapping on this sprint cycle

Scrum 3 on April 5th 2019

Attendees: Lauren, Travis, Earving

- Meeting Date/Time: 04/05/19 during lecture time
- Meeting Place: Lecture classroom
- Purpose: Status updates on respective tasks for project
- Summary: Most of us haven't kept up with the project this iteration due to various circumstances. The goal is for all of us to meet tonight's deadline, but we acknowledged the possibility that we may end up finishing this iteration one day late, especially considering that lab 5 is due tonight and most/all of us are not finished with that yet. Earving has made significant progress this iteration and is waiting on his code to be reviewed/tested. He has two pull requests open on GitHub, so be sure to check that out. Earving asked that we all try to review it before he merges the code into master, to make double sure that there are no bugs present.

Description on how work was split between teammates

We started by making a rough outline of what we believed were the requirements for our MVP Uno-like game. Making a Gantt chart we used this as our basis for timing elements and splitting tasks. Everyone was assigned tasks more or less at random with flexibility to work on other tasks or new tasks being assigned when needed. I tried to make sure no one was crowded on too much work the best I could. We also used this online Gantt chart as a sort of progress tracker, everyone updating the percentages they did as they went.

Challenges and how they were overcome or dealt with

Eric - The main challenge here I think is we had no 'anchor' point which to use as a barometer for how well we're doing. Unlike the Minesweeper lab there's no "requirements" set in stone to compare against, we have to decide on our own what is acceptable and what isn't. I think we did a good job in providing an MVP, whilst not to our original design goals I think we've come very close and what we have works.

Lauren - We struggled with time management. We used the gantt chart that we learned about in class, and I believe that is what helped us more than anything. It was mainly the deadlines listed on the gantt chart in particular that were useful. Even if we waited until the last minute, our deadlines were in increments, so we were able to still make progress on tasks even if the tasks were done a little after when we were supposed to do them. The tasks themselves were pretty vague but we were fine with just having a basic idea of what everyone was working on.

Travis - The biggest challenge I came up against ended up being an issue with the programming language itself. When implementing wild cards, it was a non-issue to wait for next user input until after the current player selected which color their wild card would be. When playing against the bot, however, the code would continue to run right into the next turn before the wild card was fully played. Ended up having to collaborate with Earving, who rearranged some blocks of code so we could implement setTimeout(). Unfortunately, we got this figured out too close to deadline and decided to hold off on radically altering the structure of the code the day before the demo.

Earving - A big struggle for me was getting my work merged with master in a timely manner. One of my branches took 6 days to get merged with master after I had asked for review. It was better for future features since the scrums in class allowed me to ask them in person.

Any features that did not make the demo version

Eric - The main one that comes to mind is a more 'visually pleasing' playing field and Wild Card logic. We decided to cut Wild Cards as discussed with Professor Kline we just couldn't get the user inputs to play nice with multi-threaded logic. This will be something for our Sprint 2 for sure. Otherwise, I think we got a majority of our features in that we wanted.

Lauren - The overall design improvement did not make the demo version. It did not impact gameplay other than allowing cards to be clicked on instead of having to type in the index of the card the user wants to play. This was not added due to issues with trying to merge to master. A lot of code changes were not merged to master over time, so at the end the code conflicts were too complex to deal with in time for project 3.

Travis - It would have been cool if we could have added more special cards, like special 7s or 0s that shift player hands, or even made up new special cards. I also hope we are able to implement server-side multiplayer in part 2.

Earving - I would have liked to have added extra 'special' cards to the uno game, and it was a shame that we were not able to implement the bots working with wild and draw 4 cards.

Retrospective on what the team would have done different

Eric - I'm much happier about how things went with this project then with project 3. We were much better organized and MUCH better at meeting our goals in a timely manner, leaving us enough 'wiggle room'. My one fix would be maybe a more realistic view of how challenging some stuff can be. We did get hit by a few surprises on difficulty (mainly the Wild Cards) which is making me rethink our Sprint 2 goals.

Lauren - We started out doing better than before, but the closer we got to the deadline the more we delayed getting tasks done on time. I think this team procrastinates too much, and combining that with everyone being busy in general, it was kind of a recipe for disaster. I also think everyone was too easy going. We all depended on each other for different things but a lot of times if someone was slacking, we all just let it slide. I think it would have helped to do daily scrums over our discord channel, and for each person to clearly list their blockers (who/what prevents them from finishing x tasks). The gantt chart deadlines did make it easier to at least generally see where people were at and remind all of us to do our tasks, but it wasn't enough.

Travis - We got a little bit gun shy on merging our smaller working branches to master, which made it harder to make sure we were all working off of the same or similar code base.

Earving - I feel like we really struggled getting our work done with time. A lot of it was done the day before it had to be done, which made it difficult. We should have discussed more what each of our works entailed and what all had to be implemented for each of us.